

**AMENDED HICKORY CORRIDOR/ CASCADE LOCKS URBAN RENEWAL PLAN**  
**March 2004/ Amended March 2006**

**I. Location of the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area**

The Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area is located in the City of Akron, County of Summit, State of Ohio, and is bounded as shown on Map B and as described in Exhibit 1, attached. The Renewal Area consists of approximately 140 acres and is located immediately northwest of downtown Akron. The Renewal Area is generally bounded by Memorial Parkway on the north, the Little Cuyahoga River and North Howard Street on the east, Martin Luther King Boulevard and the Innerbelt on the south and valley walls of the Little Cuyahoga River and the Ohio and Erie Canal on the west. A 10.17 acre lot located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Hickory Street and Memorial Parkway is excluded from the project boundary. A Redevelopment Plan was prepared for this lot in August 2002 to facilitate new housing construction.

**II. Statement of Development Objectives to be Achieved by the Project**

The goals of the City of Akron in undertaking the project are to work closely with neighborhood residents and property owners to: 1) eliminate blight and to prevent the recurrence of blight in the project area; 2) eliminate incompatible land uses in the project area; 3) facilitate the development of new housing and new retail opportunities in appropriate locations in the project area to offset economic stagnation; and 4) increase the attractiveness of the project area.

To carry out project goals, the following specific objectives are proposed:

**A. Land Use Objective**

1. Remove blighted properties within the project area which are deteriorated, or a threat to the public health, safety and general welfare.
2. Change zoning to match desired land uses.
3. Increase the attractiveness and stability of the residential area by facilitating new home construction and assuring that existing structures meet present day development standards.

4. Eliminate incompatible land uses that detract from the viable development of the area.
5. Create a new mixed used development of retail and housing in Cascade Locks Park while designating and utilizing land for open space/recreational purposes. All proposed development in Park boundaries will refer to the master plan for the Cascade Locks Park, including the preservation and/or enhancement of cultural and/or historic resources in the Cascade Locks Historic District.
6. Complete the section of the Towpath Trail from the Mustill Store south into downtown Akron and explore additional pedestrian linkages with surrounding areas.
7. In addition to open space that will remain undeveloped due to existing topography, preserve existing open space at the former Putnam Street location and within 75 feet of the Towpath Trail. Existing foliage shall be maintained in these areas.
8. In all areas, respect a Riparian Corridor Overlay Zone extending 150 feet in width landward from the ordinary high watermark of each bank of the Little Cuyahoga River and restricting development alongside the Little Cuyahoga River in the following fashion:
  - a. No development within 25 feet of the ordinary high watermark other than that required for or associated with maintenance or improvement to the Towpath Trail or necessary streambank stabilization measures. This 25 foot buffer shall include native trees, shrubs, bushes, ground cover and turfgrass and shall be kept in a natural or scenic condition. Tree removal may only occur to maintain the ecological health of a forest and/or to create access to the river as approved.
  - b. Limited development within 125 feet of the ordinary high watermark, restricted to accessory uses and structures provided they are setback at least 35 feet from the ordinary high watermark. Such uses and structures shall be associated with a principal use or structure. Only unpaved driveways or walks surfaced with gravel

or other permeable surfaces are permitted. No asphalt, concrete or similar impervious surfaces are permitted. Lawns, gardens and private and public open space is permitted provided the use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers is minimized and judiciously applied. Grading, filling and general site preparation activity is permitted provided a gradual change in topography is maintained between 25 feet and 35 feet of the ordinary high watermark.

- c. No asphalt plants, dry cleaners, gasoline service stations, commercial car washes and other auto-related uses, junkyards, landfills, transfer stations or recycling facilities, oil and gas wells, storage or discharge of hazardous materials and chemicals, commercial storage and petroleum storage, quarries and borrow pits, sand and gravel extraction, road maintenance facilities and road salt storage are allowed within 150 feet of the ordinary high watermark. Tree removal is discouraged.

B. Housing Objective

1. Acquire and/or demolish severely deteriorated structures or structures necessary to carry out development objectives.
2. Create new housing of varying densities to take advantage of a unique setting in close proximity to downtown Akron, the Little Cuyahoga River, the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail and Cascade Locks Park. Infill housing should complement existing housing in terms of size, setback and general building elevations (in terms of roof lines being parallel or perpendicular to the street).
3. Construct a variety of housing types to afford a choice for Akron residents in terms of size, style and price.
4. Assist occupants of homes purchased for demolition with relocation and afford them the opportunity to relocate into new homes in the Renewal Area if they so desire. If relocation is necessary, the City will follow the Relocation Plan and Activity Program adopted by Akron City Council.

5. Assist in providing housing of standard quality in the area by eliminating housing code violations through housing rehabilitation.
6. Discourage conversions of single-family homes into multi-unit structures.
7. Encourage ongoing pride, respect, and maintenance of residential property on the part of homeowners, landlords and tenants. Give particular attention to rental property.

C. Environmental Objectives

Develop an attractive and visually improved environment within the Renewal Area:

1. Remove properties which are poorly maintained or deteriorated, attract nuisance activities and are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the general public and persons who pass through the area.
2. Remove blight in the area caused by overcrowding or inappropriate land use.
3. Implement redevelopment which will prevent blighted conditions from recurring which are harmful to persons within, adjacent to, and who pass through the renewal area.
4. Improve the functional and physical condition of the project area.
5. Keep the project area free of debris, trash and litter. Encourage property owners to clean up any lot littered with trash, debris or anything else that constitutes a blighting influence to neighboring properties.
6. Encourage development while referencing the goals of the master plan for Cascade Locks Park.
7. Maintain a 75 foot development buffer adjacent to the Towpath Trail for accessory structures or parking and 100 feet for principal structures.

8. Encourage pedestrian linkages.
9. Respect a Riparian Corridor Overlay as outlined in Section II A8.

D. Public Improvements Objective

Provide the public improvements necessary for redevelopment, including streets, utilities, water and sewer, sidewalks, curbing, street trees, street lighting, etc. where necessary.

1. Eliminate conditions which cause an excessive amount of ice buildup and puddling at the curve in Hickory Street near 632 Hickory Street. Consider re-routing the street in this location.
2. Eliminate the sharp angle at the Hickory Street/Walnut Street intersection by re-positioning the North Street/Walnut Street intersection further east and reconstructing the street.

E. Circulation Objectives

Reduce conflicts among all forms of circulation routes, including pedestrian, vehicular, school and commercial traffic:

1. Upgrade Hickory Street enough to assure safe access and sufficient vehicular circulation while maintaining the basic layout of the street in the project area, which helps to slow traffic.
2. Provide well-lit and landscaped parking areas for any surface lots.
3. Evaluate the potential vacation of North Maple Street from the top of the hill north. This will help eliminate nuisance activities associated with this dead-end street.
4. Eliminate the sharp angle at the Hickory Street/Walnut Street intersection by re-positioning the North Street/Walnut Street intersection further east and reconstructing the street.

F. Economic Objective

Promote new housing construction and retail development where appropriate to revitalize the redevelopment area and provide new housing opportunities for Akron residents.

### **III. Types of Proposed Renewal Actions**

Proposed renewal actions to be carried out by the City following adoption of the Renewal Plan may include acquisition and clearance of property, the sale or lease of land for redevelopment, construction of supporting infrastructure, vacation of streets and other rights of way and additional actions to support new housing construction, retail or office activity. Redevelopment sites controlled by the City are to be acquired by agreements with the City setting forth permitted uses, use restrictions and development requirements. The sale or lease of City-owned property, and the terms of the associated development agreements, requires review by the City Planning Commission and the approval of Akron City Council.

### **IV. Land Use Plan**

#### **A. Permitted Land Uses**

Permitted land uses within the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area include a mixture of attached and detached single-family, apartment, retail and recreational/open space uses dependent upon location and review. Apartments are not a permitted use north of North Street. Site specific mixed use retail and residential development is only permitted south of North Street. Permitted retail uses south of North Street are restricted to those uses identified in Section 153.107 A-2 of the Akron Zoning Code. See Recommended Land Use Map E.

#### **B. Zoning**

##### **1. Existing Zoning Map**

Existing zoning consists of a mix of U1 Single Family, U1-B Two Family, U3 Retail Business, U4 Commercial, U5 Ordinary Industry and U6 Government. Much of the zoning in the area does not reflect existing conditions. See Existing Zoning Map C.

##### **2. Proposed Zoning**

In order to facilitate the development of new housing in the area and more accurately reflect existing conditions, the following zoning changes are recommended:

Change zoning in the Renewal Area north of North Street to U1 Single Family, excepting the following locations:

1. The Mustill House and Store, trailhead and immediate surrounding area (currently zoned UG Government, will remain unchanged).
2. The Abtec property at 21 west North Street (currently zoned U5 Ordinary Industry, will be rezoned to U4 Commercial).
3. Parcel #6824877 located at 250 North Howard Street (currently zoned U4 Commercial, will remain unchanged).
4. All City owned property located west of Howard Street and north and east of the Ohio and Erie Canal (generally includes property along the old vacated portion of Cuyahoga Street, currently zoned U4 Commercial, rezone to UG Government).

For properties south of North Street in the Renewal Area:

- Change the zoning for properties along Howard Street following rear property lines at a depth of approximately 140 feet to 115 feet from North Street south to the southern property line of Parcel #6742569 (132 North Howard Street) from U5 Ordinary Industry to U3 A2 Retail.
- Change the zoning for properties along Howard Street following rear property lines at a depth of approximately 115 feet from the southern property line of Parcel #6742569 (132 North Howard Street) south to the boundary of the Renewal Area from U4 Commercial to U3 A2 Retail.
- Change zoning for properties along the south side of North Street to a depth of 140 feet from U5 Ordinary Industry to U3 A2 Retail.

- Change remaining zoning south of North Street from U5 Industrial to U1 Single Family.
- Change zoning for the City owned parcel #6735213 (located immediately west of the Renewal Area boundary) from U1 Single Family to UG Government (proposed trailhead parking).

See Proposed Zoning Map F.

### C. Additional Development Standards and Regulations

In addition to complying with the development standards and regulations set forth in the Akron Zoning Code, new development in the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area shall comply with the following:

1. For property north of North Street excluding all properties located east of the Ohio and Erie Canal:
  - a. Site plans and proposed building elevations for developments of four or more structures shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and receive the approval of the Akron City Planning Commission.
  - b. A mixture of attached and detached single-family housing types is desired.
  - c. The design, layout and access to off-street parking shall be reviewed and approved by the City for developments of three or more structures. Covered, two-car parking is recommended for all housing. In some cases, depending on the style of unit, a single-car garage with an open parking space can be provided.
  - d. Recessed garages and side entry garages are recommended. No garage will be allowed to protrude out from the primary building facade. Detached garages are acceptable
  - e. For units with front porches, a porch of at least 8 feet in depth is encouraged; where appropriate, it should run the



full length of the front façade. Front porches must have a minimum depth of 6 feet.

- f. Development must maintain a set back of 75 feet from the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath for all accessory structures and parking; and 100 feet for all principal structures.

2. For property south of North Street:

- a. Site plans, proposed building elevations and all signage for any non-residential development or development of three or more structures, including mixed used structures shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and receive the approval of the Akron City Planning Commission.
- b. A mixture of single-family attached units, apartments, retail uses, and recreational/open space use is desired.
- c. For buildings constructed on lots with Howard Street frontage, the maximum allowable setback from the right-of-way is 10 feet.
- d. The master plan for Cascade Locks Park will be consulted in reviewing all development proposals.
- e. The design, layout and access to all off-street parking shall be reviewed and approved by the City. Along Howard Street, all off-street parking must be located behind or beside buildings. No parking will be allowed between the primary building facade and the street. For parking beside a building, a 10-foot landscape buffer (minimum) is required.
- f. No garage will be allowed to protrude out from the primary building façade.
- g. For units with front porches, a porch of at least 8 feet in depth is encouraged; where appropriate, it should run the full length of the front façade. Porches are required to have a minimum depth of 6 feet.

3. For all property in the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area;
  - a. No billboards or outdoor advertising displays of any nature shall be placed, erected or located in the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Area except for the purpose of advertising redevelopment activity occurring as part of this plan.
  - b. All permanent signs shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and receive the approval of the Akron City Planning Commission. The following guidelines apply to all exterior signage in the Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Urban Renewal Area:
    - 1) Building mounted signage shall be for business identification only.
    - 2) Pole signs are prohibited.
    - 3) Ground mounted signs shall be for one business only.
    - 4) All signage materials shall be compatible with building materials and colors.
    - 5) Mechanically moving signage or flashing lights shall be prohibited.
    - 6) A sign may not project above the roof of a structure to which it is affixed.
  - c. All private and public utilities will be placed underground.
  - d. All outdoor storage areas shall be screened from view by solid walls or solid fences at least six feet in height. Such fencing and screening material shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Urban Development. Stockade or chain-link fencing is not permitted in the development.
  - e. Vehicular ingress and egress shall be approved by the Traffic Engineer.
  - f. All public exterior areas shall be well lighted in a manner suitable for the intended use. Lighting should be adequate for the intended use, but should be sited and of

such a nature as to not be intrusive into surrounding areas.

- g. The developer shall submit a storm water management plan to control the run-off, siltation and sedimentation during construction and to control the run-off after the development is completed. The plan is to be consistent with all the requirements of Section 193.101-.114 of the Code of Ordinances and is subject to the approval of the Bureau of Engineering. The storm water management plan must be submitted prior to the issuance of any building permits.
- h. All site plans shall be subject to approval by the City of Akron's Development of Planning and Urban Development.
- i. For development exceeding four units, all landscape plans shall be prepared by a registered landscape architect. The plan shall identify all plant material to be used by name, species, size, location, spacing and any other necessary information. Recommended landscaping material should be identified for use by individual property owners.
- j. Buildings shall share a common vernacular and be constructed of same quality of materials. Building materials shall emphasize natural materials, e.g. wood, stone, brick, and stucco. Significant use of brick and stone masonry on the building elevations is expected.
- k. Mailboxes will be attached to the house or clustered in appropriate locations. No freestanding mailboxes will be allowed.

## **V. Project Proposals**

### **A. Land Acquisition and Disposition**

#### **1. Identification of Real Property Proposed to be Acquired**

Property will be acquired as necessary in order to meet development objectives. Property acquisition and disposition

is subject to approval by Akron City Council. See Exhibit 6 and Map G, Proposed Acquisitions.

2. Conditions under which Properties Not Identified to be Acquired may be Acquired

Properties which are severely deteriorated (substandard or major deterioration) may be acquired in order to remove conditions of blight which constitute a threat to health, safety and welfare in the area. Structures which are not substandard or in a state of major deterioration, may be acquired when they are necessary for public improvements, or when their acquisition is necessary in order to carry out the development goals of the plan, and to permit proper and orderly development in the project area.

3. Conditions under which Properties Identified to be Acquired may not be Acquired.

As properties are identified for acquisition, such properties may not be acquired if it is determined that an acceptable alternative will achieve the objectives of the Plan, if project priorities change or if Federal Program funding is substantially reduced.

B. Rehabilitation and Conservation

The project involves new construction and rehabilitation. For properties not designated for acquisition, inspection services, technical assistance, grants, matching grants, deferred loans and low interest loans will be available to assist property owners with building improvements.

C. Redeveloper's Obligations for Land Purchased or Leased from the City of Akron

1. Developers will be obligated to construct and maintain the structures and facilities in accordance with all codes and ordinances of the City of Akron and must abide by the development standards prepared for the area.
2. Construction of four or more units upon land sold or leased by the City shall be in accordance with all terms and conditions of

a Lease Agreement or Redevelopment Agreement executed by the City and the project developer.

3. The Developer of four or more units shall submit site plans and building plans to the City of Akron, Department of Planning and Urban Development. The Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission shall review these plans, and the City Planning Commission shall approve these plans prior to commencement of construction to assure compliance with the Renewal Plan. It is expressly understood that approval of any plans by the City of Akron applies to any and all features shown thereon; and that any subsequent additions, deletions, or other modifications thereof are required to be submitted by the developer before construction of such modifications can begin.
4. The Developer shall commence new construction on land acquired by the City and conveyed to the Developer within 12 months after conveyance.
5. The Developer shall agree that no covenant, agreement, lease conveyance or other instrument relating to the property shall be effected or executed on the basis or race, creed, color, sex or national origin in the sale, lease, use or occupancy thereof.

D. Design Guidelines & Recommendations for single family-residential structures built on lots acquired from the City

Buyers of single lots from the City in order to construct single-family homes must present a site plan and elevation of the proposed structures. Builders of these houses must follow these guidelines in the design of the house.

1. Foundation:
  - a. Exposed foundations of brick veneer, stone, split-face block, or poured and textures concrete are encouraged on all exposed foundations, and required on exposed foundations over 18 inches in height.
  - b. Identify material and color on elevations.
2. Siding:

- a. Install pronounced corner boards, window / door trim, and frieze board in color contrasting with siding (if appropriate to style). Build trim elements out with filler boards to allow siding to slip behind trim.
- b. “Beltlines” or “band boards” are encouraged between first and second floors, and as transition between materials (if appropriate to style).
- c. Use of cement fiberboard siding is encouraged.
- d. If vinyl is used, a maximum reveal of 6 inches is preferred.
- e. Trim boards should be of appropriate scale.
- f. Identify materials and colors on elevations.

3. Elevations:

- a. The use of stone / masonry is encouraged (if appropriate to style), but not required if overall massing proportions, details, and materials are well thought out.
- b. No more than three (3) materials/textures/colors be used on one elevation (exclusive of foundation). Identify all materials and colors.
- c. Identify window type and brand. Style should be compatible with home style.
- d. Eaves should be well proportioned and appropriate to the architectural style.

4. Porches:

- a. Porches are encouraged (if appropriate to home style), but not required. If included, a minimum depth of 8 feet is preferred.

- b. Show railing and column details on drawing/s at appropriate scale. Columns should be of appropriate scale and detail consistent with architectural style.
- c. Consider covered back porches or other useable outdoor spaces. A minimum of 144 sq. ft. hard surface, or deck, is encouraged.

5. Garages:

- a. Detached garages are acceptable. Two-car garages are preferred.
- b. Front of garage is NOT to project beyond face of front elevation. The side of a garage may be in front of the façade if the garage is sited perpendicular to the house front. This side must contain a window.
- c. Trim should match the house.

6. Visitability

Homes designed for “*visitability*” by persons with restricted physical mobility is encouraged. This means:

- a. At least one at-grade entry
- b. That entry being at least 36” wide
- c. Interior first-floor hallways at least 36” wide
- d. First-floor bathroom or half-bath with 36” wide doorway and interior spacing suitable for wheelchair maneuverability

7. Sustainable Development, or Green Building, Guidelines

The Hickory Corridor/Cascade Locks Renewal Plan seeks to promote residential development that is approached with a concern for the environment and sustainability. Toward that end, buyers of parcels from the City will have to demonstrate the extent to which their homes and site development will respond to the following recommendations:

#### A. Site

- Minimal disturbance of site to prevent erosion
- Protect existing plants and trees
- Retain disturbed topsoil for post construction use
- Orient homes to take advantage of passive solar energy

#### B. Building envelope

- Use of poured concrete foam insulated foundation walls
- Properly drain and insulate foundation
- Maximum use of engineered lumber products
- Use of insulated wall system (structural insulated panels) with a minimum insulation factor of R-25
- Dimension of homes dictated by standard lumber lengths to minimize waste

#### C. Interior

- Maximum use of natural lighting through the use of skylights, light tubes and doors.
- Windows designed and placed to provide cross ventilation
- Low e glass for all windows
- Well insulated doors that are R-5 or greater
- No use of materials that produce out-gassing of noxious fumes
- All paint and finishes contain low volatile organic compounds
- No use of lauan as plywood or interior doors in support of endangered tropical rainforests

#### D. Roof

- 40-year life
- Made of recycled materials when available

#### E. Heating and Cooling

- Heat delivery systems installed in interior walls



- Use of high efficiency heating and cooling system (90% or better)
- Programmable thermostats
- Installation of whole house ventilation system
- All hot water lines insulated

F. Appliances and Plumbing

- Use of energy Star appliances
- Maximum use of compact fluorescent bulbs
- Water saving fixtures and utilities

G. Flooring

- Use of recycled wood, cork, bamboo or other sustainable materials
- Natural or recycled content carpeting
- Water based urethane finishes
- Ceramic tile installed with low COC adhesives

H. Cabinetry and Trim

- No materials manufactured with formaldehyde
- Recycled, engineered or certified forest wood

I. Exterior

- Use of long lasting finishes such as brick, stone, stucco or fiber cement
- Solar powered exterior lighting
- Decking and outdoor furnishing made from recycled materials or wood from certified forests
- Downspout must discharge at least five feet from foundation

J. Garages

- Detached or, if attached, sealed and ventilated to minimize seepage of automobile fumes into the house

K. Construction waste

- Maximize recycling of construction waste

## VI. Other Provisions

### A. Relationship to Local Objectives

The objectives and proposals of this Redevelopment Plan conform with the general plan for the City of Akron to develop a variety of housing types in appropriate and desirable housing locations. The Urban Renewal Plan provides for the redevelopment of the project area in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare.

### B. Relocation Plan

Should action by the City result in displacement of any residents or businesses, the relocation of displaced individuals or families will be carried out in conformance with the City of Akron Relocation Plan and Activity Program.

### C. Duration of the Renewal Plan Restrictions

The Renewal Plan and/or modification thereof shall be in force and effect for a period of 40 years from the date of approval of this Renewal Plan by the City of Akron. The termination of this Renewal Plan shall in no way permit the project land or any part thereof to be restricted on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin in the sale, use, or occupancy thereof; nor shall it permit the practice of discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.

### D. Provisions for Amending Approved Plan

This Renewal Plan may be amended from time to time upon approval by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

## VII. Legislation to be Utilized to Fulfill Plan Objectives

- A. Ohio Revised Code: Creating an Incentive District and Authorizing Urban Redevelopment Tax Increment Equivalent (Sections 5709.40 to 5709.43)

In December, 2001, the Ohio Legislature revised the Ohio Revised Code to permit the use of tax increment financing in Incentive Districts for public infrastructure improvements in a residential project.

